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GOVERNOR

JARED BLUMENFELD
SECRETARY FOR
ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

State Water Resources Control Board

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD AND NOTICE OF INTENT TO ADOPT A MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION FOR SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA EDISON COMPANY'S KAWEAH HYDROELECTRIC PROJECT

To Interested Parties:

On June 5, 2020, Southern California Edison Company (SCE) filed an application with the State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board) for a water quality certification (certification) pursuant to section 401 of the Clean Water Act (33 U.S.C. § 1341) for the Kaweah Hydroelectric Project (Proposed Project) (Federal Energy Regulatory Commission Project No. 298).

The State Water Board, as the lead agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), intends to adopt a Mitigated Negative Declaration and an Initial Study (IS/MND) for the Proposed Project. This information is provided to satisfy the formal written notice requirements for public review of a proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration (Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, § 15072). Notice is hereby given that the State Water Board is accepting comments on the Proposed Project's IS/MND.

Proposed Project Description:

The Proposed Project is located on the Kaweah and East Fork Kaweah rivers near the community of Three Rivers in Tulare County, California. The Proposed Project encompasses 314.82 acres, including 171.29 acres of public lands administered by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and 143.53 acres of SCE-owned or private land.

The Proposed Project is a hydroelectric project that consists of continued operations of three developments: Kaweah No. 1, Kaweah No. 2, and Kaweah No. 3. The Proposed Project has a limited storage capacity of 11.93 acre-feet [ac-ft] with a dependable generating capacity of 8.85 megawatts (MW). Water captured at diversion structures (Kaweah No. 1 Diversion Dam, Middle Fork Diversion Dam (non-Proposed Project facility), and Kaweah No. 2 Diversion Dam) is transported through connecting flowlines and penstocks to each powerhouse (Kaweah No. 1 Powerhouse, Kaweah No. 2 Powerhouse, and Kaweah No. 3 Powerhouse) and then returned to the Kaweah River through each powerhouse's tailrace.

In addition to continued operations, the Proposed Project includes the following changes: 1) increases in minimum instream flows; 2) ramping rates for instream flows downstream of the Kaweah No. 1 Diversion and Kaweah No. 2 Diversion; and 3)

E. JOAQUIN ESQUIVEL, CHAIR | EILEEN SOBECK, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

recreation enhancements at the Kaweah No. 2 Powerhouse River Access Parking Area, including the installation of a portable restroom and a trash receptacle.

SCE owns and operates other facilities in the Kaweah River that are not part of the Proposed Project and are therefore not part of this IS/MND's analysis. In relation to Kaweah No. 1 development, SCE operates four small reservoirs (Eagle Lake, Lady Franklin Lake, Crystal Lake, and Upper Monarch Lake (collectively referred to as the Mineral King Lakes)) that release water during the late summer and fall months to augment flows in the East Fork Kaweah River. In relation to Kaweah No. 3, SCE operates Middle Fork Diversion Dam and additional portions of the flowline to Kaweah No. 3 Powerhouse. These portions of the Kaweah No. 1 and No. 3 developments are located within the Sequoia National Park (SNP) and are currently operated under a Special Use Permit (SUP) (Permit Number PWR-SEKI-6000-2016-015) issued to SCE by the National Park Service (NPS) (NPS 2016).

Comment Submittal and Deadline:

The State Water Board is accepting comments on the IS/MND for the Proposed Project. The comment period is from the date of this notice through April 26, 2021. **Comments must be received by 5:00 pm on April 26, 2021.** Comments can be submitted electronically or by mail to:

Mr. Chase Hildeburn
State Water Resources Control Board – Division of Water Rights
Water Quality Certification Program
P.O. Box 2000
Sacramento, CA 95812-2000
or
Email: wr401program@waterboards.ca.gov

The IS/MND is available on the State Water Board's [Kaweah Hydroelectric Project webpage](#):

https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/waterrights/water_issues/programs/water_quality_cert/kaweah_ferc298.html

If you cannot access the document online, hardcopies of the IS/MND will be available at the locations listed below. Please call the location for appointment information.

Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board Office
1685 "E" Street
Fresno, CA 93706
(559) 445-5910
Open Monday – Friday
8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
by appointment only

State Water Resources Control Board/CalEPA Office
1001 "I" Street, 2nd Floor Room 2-114
Sacramento, CA 95814
(916) 341-5300
Open Wednesday and Friday
9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.
by appointment only

KEEP INFORMED OF PROPOSED PROJECT MILESTONES

To receive emails related to the Proposed Project and other projects pursuing certifications managed by the Division of Water Rights, interested persons should enroll in the “Water Rights Water Quality Certification” e-mail notification service. Instructions on how to sign up for the State Water Board’s Email Subscription List are outlined below:

1. Visit:

http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/resources/email_subscriptions/swrcb_subscribe.shtml#rights

2. Provide your name and email in the required fields.

3. In the categories below the email and name fields, select “Water Rights,” then “Water Rights Water Quality Certification.”

4. Click the "Subscribe" button.

5. An email will be sent to you. You must respond to the email message to confirm your membership on the selected list(s).

By enrolling in this email list, you will receive notices for other current projects in the Division of Water Rights’ Water Quality Certification Program, including the Proposed Project. If you do not have internet access or do not wish to participate in the email subscription list, you may contact Mr. Chase Hildeburn at the phone number listed below to request to receive notices for the Proposed Project by mail. You can enroll or un-enroll from the email subscription service at any time.

If you have questions regarding this notice, please contact Mr. Chase Hildeburn by phone at (916) 323-0358 or by email at chase.hildeburn@waterboards.ca.gov.

Ann Marie Ore
Program Manager
Division of Water Rights

3/25/2021

Date